

WE CLAIM:

1. A system for authenticating a document, the system comprising
an endorsement system having a first scanning component, a
printing component, and a first processing component, the first scanning
component obtaining biometric information from a first person presenting the
document, the first processing component receiving the biometric information
5 and providing a biometric image, the printing component applying the biometric
image to an article;
a database system providing storage of the biometric image, the
database system responding to a request for the biometric image by providing a
10 template comprising extracted features of the biometric image; and
a verification system having a second scanning component and a
second processing component, the second scanning component obtaining the
biometric image from the document presented to the verification system by a
second person, the second processing component requesting the biometric
15 image from the database system, the second processing component comparing
the biometric image with the template received as a result of the request and
providing an indicator as to whether the document is valid or invalid.
2. The system described in Claim 1, wherein the printing component
uses a sublimation dye process to apply the biometric image onto the article.
3. The system described in Claim 1, wherein the article is a passport
photograph.
4. The system described in Claim 1, wherein the article is a label.

5. The system described in Claim 4, wherein the label contains pre-printed calibration marks and is capable of being applied to the document, wherein removal or alteration of the label is visually detectable.

6. The system described in Claim 5, wherein the document is a bill of lading.

7. The system described in Claim 1, wherein the biometric information is provided by a fingerprint.

8. The system described in Claim 1, wherein the first person and the second person are the same person.

9. The system described in Claim 1, wherein the second scanning component obtains biometric information from the second person and the second processing component compares the biometric data with the template.

10. An endorsement system comprising
a means for capturing biometric data from a fingerprint of a
person;
a means for augmenting the biometric data with a signature of the
5 person;
a means for further augmenting the biometric data with a
date/time stamp;
a means for providing a biometric image from the augmented
biometric data; and
10 a means for affixing the biometric image to an original document
provided by the person;

whereby the original document with the affixed biometric image may subsequently be positively verified as authentic so that it may be confidently used for evidentiary purposes.

11. The system described in claim 10, wherein the means for affixing the biometric image to an original document comprises a sublimation dye printing process.

12. The system described in claim 10, wherein the means for capturing biometric data comprises a scanning component with a plurality of imaging circuits and a light source capable of providing a discrete set of wavelengths, each imaging circuit digitally capturing the response of the
5 fingerprint to successive exposures to light having the different wavelengths.

13. A method for authenticating a document presented by a person, the document having an access code visibly imprinted thereon, the method comprising

successively illuminating a biological portion of the person with
5 light spectra from a light emitting source, each light spectrum having a wavelength successively and exhaustively chosen from a set of selected spectral ranges;

developing a digital geometrical representation of the biological
portion;

10 encoding the digital geometrical representation as a biometric image;

storing the biometric image in a database in association with the access code;

15 imprinting a label with the biometric image using a dye sublimation printing process;

applying the label to the document; and

verifying the authenticity of the document by comparing the biometric image imprinted on the label on the document with a template derived from the biometric image stored in the database and associated with the access code, the biometric image having been retrieved from the database as a result of manual entry of the access code.

14. The method described in claim 13, wherein the biological portion is a member of the group consisting of the fingers and the thumbs of both of the person's hands.

15. The method described in claim 13, wherein the document is chosen from the group consisting of a bill of lading and a waybill.

16. The method described in claim 13, wherein manual entry of the access code comprises the steps of reading the access code from the document by an operator and entering the access code through a computer terminal.

17. A method for endorsing a photo identification document presented by a person, the method comprising

taking a photograph of the person;

successively illuminating a biological portion of the person with light spectra from a light emitting source, each light spectrum having a wavelength successively and exhaustively chosen from a set of selected spectral ranges;

developing a digital geometrical representation of the biological portion;

encoding the digital geometrical representation as a biometric image;

imprinting the back of the photograph of the person with the biometric image using a dye sublimation printing process;
submitting an application by the person for a photo identification
15 document, the application including the photograph;
storing a digital image of the photograph and the biometric image in a database;
obtaining an address associated with the digital image and the biometric image;
20 providing a second photograph having the address imprinted on the reverse side of the photograph in barcode form to the person; and
verifying the authenticity of the photo identification document by comparing the biometric image obtained from the person and a template derived from the biometric image stored in the database, the biometric image
25 associated with the address.

18. A system for endorsing a document for subsequent verification comprising
an endorsement system having a first scanning component, a printing component, and a first processing component, the first scanning
5 component for obtaining biometric information from a person for attachment to the document, the first processing component for receiving the biometric information and providing a biometric code, the printing component for attaching the biometric code to the document to create an endorsed document.